'Ukrainian' Yiddish). Modern Standard Yiddish (StYid.) is the variety that conforms to modern reference manuals, especially the ones associated with the YIVO (*yidisher visnshaftlekher institut*) Institute of Jewish Research (New York). While the pronunciation is inspired by Northeastern dialects, the grammar draws more on Southern dialects. German, too, contributed to the standardization, especially under the influence of those that regarded Yiddish as a corruption of German. Yet this German-based purism had an inverse effect as well, as it triggered an anti-German purism, successfully banning many of the German-inspired (*daytshmerish*) features, typical of some written Yiddish of the second half of the nineteenth century. Discussion will concern Standard Yiddish, unless otherwise noted.

12.2 Phonology

Vowels

Yiddish dialects differ radically in their vocalism, but minimally in their consonantism. The traditional classification of Modern Yiddish dialects is based on the realizations of Proto-Yiddish (PYid.) */ei/ and */ou/, as exemplified in the words for 'meat' (StYid. /flejʃ/) and 'to buy' (StYid. /kojfn/), respectively. Thus, CYid. /flajʃ/, /kojfn/; NEYid. /flejʃ/, /kejfn/; SEYid. /flejʃ/, /kojfn/. (Characteristic for largely extinct Western Yiddish are /fla:ʃ/, /ka:fn/.)

The vowel systems of Standard Yiddish and the major dialects are given in Table 12.1. Underlying the synchronic symmetries in the given vowel systems are a number of dialect-specific diachronic developments. For example, varieties of Yiddish which have preserved phonemic vowel-length distinctions have filled the /a:/ gap (from Proto-Yiddish times) in different ways:

Table 12.1 Stressed vowel systems: Standard Yiddish and major dialects (one variant each)

	Standard Yiddish	Western Yiddish	Central Yiddish	Southeastern Yiddish	Northeastern Yiddish
High	i u	i – i: u – u:	i – i: u – u:	i – ɨ u	i u
Mid	e o	e – e: o – o:	e – — o – —	e o	e o
Low	a	a – a:	a – a:	a	a
	ej oj	ej ou (~ au)	ej oj, ou	ej oj	ej oj
	aj	aj	aj	aj	aj

CYid. /a:/ < PYid. */aj/ (CYid. /ha:nt/ < */hajnt/ 'today'); WYid. /a:/ < PYid. */ei/, */ou/ (WYid. /fla:ʃ/ < */fleiʃ/ 'meat'; /ka:fn/ < */koufn/ 'buy').

The stressed-vowel system of Standard Yiddish is – historically – a simplified one, with mergers occurring at every point in the system except Proto-Yiddish */aj/ (cognate MHG /i:/). Standard Yiddish has a basic five-vowel system: /i, e, a, o, u/, plus the three diphthongs /ej, aj, oj/ (and is thus identical – synchronically, though not in terms of historical development – with one variety of Northeastern Yiddish). Distinctive vowel length has been lost; Proto-Yiddish long monophthongs are realized in Standard Yiddish either as diphthongized (PYid. */e:/, */o:/ as StYid. /ej/, /oj/), or shortened (PYid. */i:/, */u:/, */ɛ:/, */ɔ:/ as StYid. /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, merging with existing diphthongs or short monophthongs. The cognates of Middle High German ‹î›, ‹û› are Standard Yiddish diphthongs /aj/ and /oj/ (the latter merging with other /oj/ [< PYid. */ou/], and */o:/).

Yiddish shows general unrounding of cognate Middle High German front rounded vowels; cf. StGer. *schön*, *Löcher*, *müde*, *Häuser*, StYid. /ʃejn/, /lexər/, /mid/, /hajzər/ 'pretty', 'holes', 'tired', 'houses'. Regional Yiddish instances of front roundedness (e.g., [y] in Brajnsk; [øy] in Courland) are later innovations.

The issue of vowel length is crucial in Yiddish dialectology. Using a rough, geographically based generalization, it may be said that the westernmost dialects – Western Yiddish and Central Yiddish (an Eastern Yiddish dialect) – have distinctive vowel length, whereas the geographically easternmost dialects – Northeastern Yiddish, Southeastern Yiddish – lack this feature. However, the dialectal divisions are not as clear-cut in fact as this rough geographical classification implies. In Western Yiddish, the system of phonemic vowel length is quite fully entrenched and exploited. In Central Yiddish, it is arguably limited to the peripheral vowel qualities, /i:/, /a:/, /u:/. The system breaks down successively in the geographic sweep across Central Yiddish from west to east, as it approaches the Southeastern Yiddish territory. In Southeastern Yiddish, loss of length occurred relatively late, historically, and it may be argued that a length distinction remains marginally for at least one vowel quality: /i/ (either as /i:/ vs /i/, or via the qualitative distintion /i/ vs /ɨ/). Loss of distinctive vowel length is considered a primary change in the development of Northeastern Yiddish, yet even here some vowel length survived into the twentieth century in certain conservative subregions of the Northeastern territory, notably, Courland, and (less) in adjacent areas.

Glides typically pose a challenge for classification (as consonant or vowel). In Yiddish dialects, there is an important positive correlation between the presence of phonemic vowel length and the presence of the [w] (= non-syllabic [u]) glide. Whereas Proto-Yiddish (which had distinctive vowel length) is reconstructed as having both unround [j] and round [w], lengthless Standard Yiddish shows only the unround glide [j]. Length-preserving Central Yiddish and Western Yiddish have [j] and [w]. Non-length dialects

Northeastern Yiddish and Southeastern Yiddish generally lack a [w] glide. In the conservative Courland subregion of Northeastern Yiddish, which has preserved phonemic vowel length (though with rapid collapse of length distinctions in the twentieth century under the influence of Standard Yiddish), the [w] glide is found. While both glides – [w] and [j] – may be associated (in Yiddish dialects) with long vowels/diphthongs, only [j] has independent consonantal function; cf. StYid. /ojx/ 'also' vs /jojx/ 'broth'; but not /**wojx/. (The double asterisks are used to show non-occurring or non-grammatical forms.) For Standard Yiddish, at least, there is little or no synchronic justification for deriving surface [v] (e.g. /ven/ 'when') from an underlying phoneme **/w/.

A situation of vocalic overlength (three morae) is found in Central Yiddish *breaking* and *drawl*. In both processes, [ə] is inserted between certain long vowels or diphthongs and a tautosyllabic consonant, resulting in overlong vocalic sequences. In Central Yiddish *breaking*, [ə] is inserted between any long vowel/diphthong (possible exception: /a:/) and tautosyllabic velar fricative /x/, /ɾ/ (= [ɣ]); thus, compare forms with breaking (/ɾ/ in syllable rime undergoes later vocalization and loss): /bi:x/ 'book', /fi:ɾ/ '(I) lead', /fu:ɾ/ '(I) travel', /hojx/ 'high', /boux/ 'belly, stomach', /fi:ɾst/ '(you) lead' → [bi:əx], [fi:ə], [hojəx], [bouəst], [fi:əst], versus forms without breaking ($ = syllable boundary): [fi: $ ɾŋ] 'to lead', [bi: $ xə] 'books', etc. Central Yiddish *drawl* appears to be an analogical partial extension of breaking to other (non-labial/velar) tautosyllabic consonants. Here, however, the vowels/diphthongs eligible are generally more limited to those with second mora [u]; thus: /bu:d/ 'bath', /hout/ 'skin' → drawled [bu:ət], [houət], while remaining undrawled are: [bu: $ dn] 'to bathe' ([d] not tautosyllabic and /brojt/ 'bread' (second mora of vowel ≠ [u]). Central Yiddish breaking is an obligatory rule, whereas drawl is an ongoing and incomplete change with optional application. In the eastern part of the Central Yiddish area drawl has been analogically extended phonologically to include the high front vowel /i:/. Also, in eastern Central Yiddish, breaking has been extended (though not uniformly) to environments where the velar fricative is not tautosyllabic: /fi: $ rn/ 'to lead', /bi:xər/ 'books' → [fi:ə $ ɾŋ], [bi:ə $ xə].

Unstressed Vowels

In dealing with unstressed vowels (at the word level) it is best to make two distinctions: (a) pre-tonic vs post-tonic position; and (b) underlying versus derived schwa. Because Germanic word stress overwhelmingly falls on the initial root syllable, pre-tonic syllables in Germanic tend to be habitually unstressed inseparable prefixes, with a greatly reduced inventory of possible vowels. In pre-tonic position, Germanic-component words tend to be limited to either [ə] (/gəzén/ 'seen') or [a] (/bakúmən/ 'get, receive', /antlójfn/ 'run away'; cf. Ger. *bekommen* 'get, receive', *entlaufen* 'run away'). Through input from the Hebrew and Aramaic, and Slavic components (as well as

through more recent internationalisms), virtually any vowel/diphthong may occur in pre-tonic position (although here too there may be a tendency – especially in Yiddish dialects – toward a reduced inventory); e.g. /m[i]snágəd/ 'Orthodox Jewish opponent of Hasidism', /h[e]fkéjrəs/ 'neglect, wantonness, arbitrariness', /m[a]pólə/ 'defeat' /k[o]ntákt/ 'contact', /k[u]ndéjsəm/ 'urchins', /h[oj]dóə/ 'announcement'.

There is a strong general tendency in Yiddish for any post-tonic vowel or diphthong to reduce to schwa (with regional coloration). A schwa that – synchronically – is linked paradigmatically to a full vowel/diphthong is considered phonologically derived, as in: /kúnd[ə]s/ – /kund[éj]səm/ 'urchin-s', /tálm[ə]d/ – /talm[í]dəm/ 'pupil-s'. Non-linkable schwa is considered underlying in, e.g. /xánəkə/ 'Hanukkah' (cf. HA /ħănukkɔ:/, /blótə/ 'mud' (cf. Pol. *błoto*). In varieties of Northeastern Yiddish there is some retention of vowel quality in post-tonic position: PYid. */ó:lɔm/ 'world, public' > NEYid. [éjlɔm] (StYid. /ójləm/).

As part of the general weakening tendency, the sequence post-tonic vowel + tautosyllabic sonorant tend to be realized as syllabic sonorants. The deletion is not uniform, however; the tendency is strongest with nasals, less so for /l/, and generally does not occur in Standard Yiddish with /r/; thus: /nígn/ ([nigṇ]) 'melody' (cf. pl. /nigúnəm/; /mənúv|/ 'ugly/contemptible person' (pl. /mənuvóləm/), but /ʃíkər/ 'drunk' (pl. /ʃikúrəm/). Furthermore, when oblique marker *-n* is added to personal names ending in [ə], deletion does not occur: *mójʃə-n* → [mójʃən] 'Moyshe (obl.)'. Compare the oblique forms of /tátə/ meaning either 'father' or the proper name 'Dad': /tátə-n/ → [tatṇ] 'father (obl.)', versus [tatən] 'Dad (obl.)'. Deletion is also blocked where an unacceptable nasal cluster would otherwise result: deletion in /ʃrajb-ən/ → [ʃrajbm] 'to write', but no deletion in /kum-ən/ → [kumən] 'to come'. The historical apocope in the Germanic component which yields Yiddish /(ix) ʃrajb/, /kum/, /gas/, etc. (cf. StGer. (*ich*) *schreibe*, (*ich*) *komme*, *Gasse*) '(I) write, (I) come, street' occurred in the relevant source dialects of German pre-Jewish contact, and is not part of the internal phonological history of Yiddish.

A full vowel may be preserved in post-tonic position after an intervening morpheme boundary: after a strong boundary, as in: /frájnt#ʃaft/, 'friendship', /ʃéjn#kajt/ 'beauty', as well as after a weak boundary: /jid/ 'Jew' + /iʃ/ (adjective-forming suffix) → /jídiʃ/ 'Jewish'. There is a tendency in some dialects toward vowel reduction after weak boundary, thus: [jídiʃ] ~ [jídəʃ], [ʃéjd-im] ~ [ʃéjd-əm] 'ghost-s'. Again, non-alternating schwa in suffixes is synchronically underlying in Yiddish (e.g., in the adjective inflection /-ə/, in the feminine suffix /-kə/ (< Slav. /ka/), -*ə* (< HA /-ɔ:/), or in the abstract noun suffix /-*əs*/ (< HA /-u:θ/)).

Consonants

The Standard Yiddish consonant system is given in Table 12.2. There is very little variation in the phonemic consonantal system across the Yiddish

Table 12.2 Standard Yiddish consonants

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Oral stops	p		t		k	
	b		d		g	
Nasal stops	m		n	nʲ		
Fricatives		f	s	ʃ	x	h
		v	z	ʒ	—*	
Affricates			ts	tʃ		
				dʒ		
Liquids			l	lʲ		
				r**		

Notes: *In some regions /r/ = [ɣ]; **Front /r/ = trill.

dialects. Many regional features (such as the confusion/collapse of hushing/hissing distinctions (in Northeastern Yiddish) called *sabesdiker losn* 'Sabbath speech' < /*ʃabəs/ 'Sabbath', /*lɔ:ʃn/ 'tongue, language', or regional /h/-dropping: /ant/ < /hant/ 'hand' and non-organic /h/-insertion: /harbət/ < /arbət/ 'work') have largely disappeared under the pressure of standardization since the late nineteenth century.

Synchronically, Yiddish has a richer consonantism than Standard German, in terms of its (phonemic and allophonic) inventory and permissible consonant clusters. In the obstruents, there is fuller exploitation of the voicing distinction, including word-finally /zog/ '(I) say' – /zok/ 'sock'). In the affricates, Yiddish lacks /pf/ (StYid. /ferd/, /kop/, StGer. *Pferd*, *Kopf* 'horse', 'head'), but has /ts/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/.

The question of palatalized consonants (acquired largely through contact with Slavic) is problematic. In Standard Yiddish, the dentals (/t, d, s, z, n, l/) all have 'soft' (= palatalized) variants. However, only the distinctions /l – lʲ/ and /n – nʲ/ have been universally phonemicized in Eastern Yiddish (and hence, Standard Yiddish): /mol/ 'time' – /molʲ/ 'moth', /manʲə/ 'f. anthroponym' – /manjə/ 'mania'. Some Eastern Yiddish dialects have phonemicized /tʲ/, /dʲ/, and /sʲ/ as well. Allophonic palatalization of dentals and velars before a front vowel occurs regionally in varieties of Northeastern Yiddish and Southeastern Yiddish: /tir/ → [tʃir] 'door'. Standard Yiddish does not show – in Slavic loans – the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' palato-alveolar fricatives and affricates; thus, Slavic /ʃ – ʂ/, /ʒ – ʑ/, /tʃ – tɕ/, and /dʒ – dʑ/ are realized in Standard Yiddish only with /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, and /dʒ/, respectively. Standard Yiddish does not have final devoicing of obstruents. Like Standard German, Standard Yiddish, does not have geminate consonants.

Voiceless oral stops /p, t, k/ are unaspirated in Standard Yiddish. The

phonemes /t, d, n/ are realized regionally as either dental or alveolar in their basic form.

Yiddish has a much fuller set of contrasts in the fricatives than does German. To a great extent this is due to the incorporation of lexical items of Hebrew/Aramaic and Slavic origin, which contributed more fricatives in more environments than are found in the German component. For example, Yiddish has initial /x/ in words of Hebrew/Aramaic, and Slavic origin, but not in German-component words (a possible exception: /xojzək/ 'fun; mockery' < Low German source); cf. /xojv/ 'debt' < HA vs /hojf/ 'courtyard' < German-component. Thus, when both Yiddish and German have borrowed a Slavic word with initial /x/, this /x/ was integrated into fundamentally different patterns; compare the incorporation of Slavic loan #/xr-/ in Yiddish /xrejn/ 'horseradish', German dialectal /kren/ (cf. Polish *chrzan*).

A discussion of Old High German */s/ in word-initial position is particularly instructive concerning the role of fricatives in Yiddish. Diachronically, in the relevant source dialects of German, word-initial /s-/ developed in two ways: /s/ > [z] /# ____ V (**sagan* > [za:gən] 'say'); /s/ > [ʃ] / # ____ C (**slaːfan* > [ʃla:fən] 'to sleep'). Thus, in Standard German, both /z/ and /ʃ/ occur word-initially (Modern German initial /ʃ/ before a vowel < */sk/; *scheinen* 'shine, appear' < /*ski:nan/); /s/ does not (natively). In contrast, Yiddish shows a full four-way opposition word-initially:

Word-initial Sybillant Oppositions

	Before a vowel	*Before a consonant*
s	/sojnə/ 'enemy'	/slup/ 'pole'
z	/zojnə/ 'prostitute'	/zlatə/ 'fem. anthroponym'
ʃ	/ʃabəs/ 'Sabbath'	/ʃlofn/ 'sleep'
ʒ	/ʒabəs/ 'frogs'	/ʒlob/ 'yokel, hick, boor'

Yiddish inherited a three-way (word-initial) contrast (/s/, /z/, and /ʃ/) from its Hebrew/Aramaic substrate. The German component only conributed words with initial /z/ or /ʃ/. Positional [ʒ] is found in Hebrew and Aramaic words ([xeʒbm̩] < /ħeʃbo:n/ 'account'); however, the full phonemic status of /ʒ/ owes to Slavic-component input (/ʒabəs/ 'frogs').

The fullness of the set of fricative contrasts in Yiddish has also led to a richness in permissible consonant clusters beyond those found in the source languages, as illustrated, for example, by contrasting initial /sl-, zl-, ʃl-, ʒl-, str-, xr-/, etc. This richness is not limited to the fricatives, however; other non-Germanic initial clusters include, e.g. /dl-, tl-/, etc.

Eastern Yiddish dialects (as well as colonial German dialects) generally have an /l/ that is darker than in Standard German; Eastern Yiddish [l] is probably due to Slavic influence. Hard [ɬ] contrasts with soft [l^j] in many Eastern Yiddish areas (with the exception of Northeastern Yiddish); thus:

/haltn/ 'to hold' – /palʲtn/ 'overcoat'. The distinction is marginally phonemic, but often allophonic ([lʲ] before stressed front vowels). There is a general association, however, of /lʲ/ and /nʲ/ with Slavicness', and Weinreich (1958) notes the creation of 'phonological pseudo-Slavicisms' with distinct semantic functions: /laxn/ 'to laugh' (< German component) vs /lʲaxn/ 'to guffaw', /knakər/ 'big shot' vs /knʲakər/ 'big shot' (more conceited than /knakər/). Thus, while /lʲ/ and /nʲ/ are recognized as phonemes in Standard Yiddish, they have a marginal status which merits special discussion.

Standard Yiddish /r/ may be realized as either front (apical) or back (uvular); these are the major variants found in Yiddish dialects.

Standard Yiddish has three nasal consonant phonemes: /n/, /m/, and (marginally) /nʲ/. /n/ → [ŋ] before a velar consonant; unlike English or Standard German, Standish Yiddish does not delete the [g] in /-ng-/ clusters: Eng. *long* [ŋ], StGer. *lang* [ŋ], StYid. /lang/ [ŋg]. The assimilation of /n/ to place of articulation of the adjacent consonant is general: /lip-n/ [m] 'lips', /lax-n/ [ŋ] 'to laugh'. Palatal /nʲ/ does not assimilate: /bankét/ [ŋk] 'banquet' vs /banʲkəs/ [nʲk] 'cupping glasses'.

Voicing Assimilation

In Northeastern Yiddish there is general anticipatory obstruent voicing assimilation (including across word boundaries). Thus: /(ix) ʃik bixər/ → [. . . g # b . . .] '(I) send books', /(ix) lejg tfiləm/ → [. . . k # t . . .] '(I) put on phylacteries'. Central Yiddish generally lacks this assimilation, except in limited fashion in close juncture and rapid speech. Standard Yiddish has a limited form of anticipatory voicing assimilation. It is obligatory for devoicing: /ʃrajb/ + /st/ – > [ʃrajpst] 'you write', /ʃrajb/ # /tiʃ/ 'desk (= writing table)' → [ʃrajptiʃ]. It is mostly optional for voicing: /arojs + gejn/ – > [arojsgejn] ~ [arojzgejn] 'to go out'.

Syllable Types: Historical Development

Yiddish shows the results of two similar – yet historically and structurally distinct – processes of standardization of syllable quantity. Both processes occurred – independently – in pre-Yiddish times, and are reflected in the Hebrew/Aramaic, and German components of Yiddish, respectively. Both had the effect of making all stressed syllables *long*. However, what constituted *long* in the source languages differed. In the Hebrew and Aramaic component (as part of substratal pre-Yiddish Jewish vernacular), [+long] was defined as a single branching rime. Thus, original Hebrew and Aramaic long vowels in Pre-Yiddish were kept long in open syllables (HA /prɔ: $ ṭi:m/ 'details' > Pre-Yid. */prɔ́: $ tim/; StYid. /prótəm/ 'details'), shortened in (singly) closed syllables (HA /prɔ:ṭ/ > Pre-Yid. */prat/; StYid. /prat/ 'detail'). Original short vowels remained short in closed syllables, e.g. HA /mas $ qí:m/ > Pre-Yid. */más $ kim/; StYid. /máskəm + zajn/ ('be') 'agree', and lengthened in open syllables

(HA /tá $ ħaθ/ > Pre-Yid. */tɔ́ː $ xas/; StYid. /tóxəs/ 'buttocks, rump').

In the German process, short vowels were likewise lengthened in stressed open syllables (before underlying voiced consonants) /ta $ ga/ > /taː $ ge/ 'days'. However, there are two important deviations from the standardization of quantity found in the Jewish-vernacular substrate. First, long vowels were not shortened in (singly) closed syllables (Ger. /broːt/ 'bread' did not shorten). Second, in German there later occurred a paradigm-based analogical vowel lengthening; thus, [taːk] 'day' based on paradigm forms, e.g., [taːge], [taːgen], [taːges]. This analogical lengthening is not found in the Hebrew/Aramaic component; cf. StYid. /tog/ 'day' (< *long vowel), but /prat/ vs /protəm/ 'detail-s', with no analogical lengthening. As a result of these independent processes, Yiddish has a number of morphophonemic vowel alternations which are typically limited to the Hebrew/Aramaic component: (StYid.) /oj – o/, /ej – e/, /a – o/, as well as full vowel or diphthong–with schwa (see Stress shift, below, pp. 397–8). Consonant degemination (found in all components of Yiddish) blurred many of the original environments for lengthening and shortening; thus, synchronically, Yiddish has all types of stressed syllable: short, long and overlong.

Prosodic Phonology

Stress

In its dominant German component, Yiddish shows the Germanic fixed stress on initial root syllables: /léb-n/, 'to live', /léb-ə-dik/ 'lively', /léb-ə-dik-ə/ 'lively' (inflected), /ba-léb-n/ 'to animate'. Two exceptions to initial root-syllable stress are: (a) 'Semitic-type' compounding (see below); and (b) stress on verb complements in verbs and nouns derived therefrom: /ojs/ (a perfectivizer) + /fregn/ 'to ask' – > /ójsfregn/ 'to interrogate', /er fregt ójs/ 'he interrogates'; noun: /(der) ójsfreg/ '(the) quiz'. The case for claiming initial root-syllable stress is further weakened by data from the Hebrew/Aramaic, and Slavic components, as well as recent internationalisms. Gernerally, however – with one important exception – whether stress is 'initial', penultimate, or otherwise classified, it is almost always fixed throughout paradigms.

The exception concerns a large number of words of Hebrew/Aramaic origin which exhibit movable stress in Yiddish. These are almost exclusively nouns paired either by number (singular – plural), or gender (masculine – feminine); for example, StYid. /gánəf/ 'thief' – /ganóvəm/ 'thieves', /xílək/ 'difference' – /xilúkəm/ 'differences', /tálməd/ '(male) pupil' – /talmídəm/ '(male) pupils', as well as /tálməd/ 'pupil' – /talmídə/ '(female) pupil'. A common claim is that Hebrew/Aramaic origin words in Yiddish reflect a shift from original ultimate stress (in Hebrew and/or Judeo-Aramaic) to penultimate stress, possibly as a partial adaptation to the Germanic pattern of (essentially) initial stress. More recently, a metrical analysis of the problem

has suggested that there was a shift from the earlier Semitic stress pattern ẃs ('weak–strong') to a 'Germanic-like' pattern św ('strong–weak'). The movable stress in related items like /tálməd/ – /talmídəm/ arose due to differences in embedded metrical structure (in pre-Yiddish times; these differences were the result of a pre-Yiddish linear retraction of stress based on vowel length). Additionally, in a number of derived adjectives and nouns consisting of a Hebrew/Aramaic origin noun plus a Germanic derivational affix the stress falls on the (original Hebrew) second syllable; thus: /gánəf/ 'thief' – /ganóvəm/ 'thieves', /ganéjviʃ/ 'thievish'; /tálməd/ 'Talmud' – /talmúdiʃ/ 'Talmudic', /kórəv/ 'relative' – /krójvəm/ 'relatives', /krójviʃ/ 'related, kindred', /krójviʃaft/ 'kinship'; but derivations also occur which are based on singular nouns: /xávər/ 'friend' – /xavéjrəm/ 'friends', /xávəriʃ/ 'friendly', /xávərʃaft/ 'comradeship'.

Synchronically, this inherited (< Pre-Yiddish, not Hebrew) movable stress shows a mild productivity in Yiddish. Under highly stipulated conditions, some non-Hebrew/Aramaic origin nouns are attracted into the paradigm with movable stress. Typically, these nouns are bisyllabic, monomorphemic, end in a consonant, and have stress on the first syllable. They thus resemble the Hebrew/Aramaic origin nouns of type /gánəf/ 'thief', /tálməd/ 'pupil', etc. Thus: /dóktər/ 'doctor' – /doktójrəm/ 'doctors' (< source?), /kúndəs/ 'urchin' – /kundéjsəm/ 'urchins' (< Slavic). The movable-stress paradigm is not an option if stress is not originally on the first syllable; thus, /kontákt/ 'contact (noun)' has plural /kontákt-n/, not /*kontákt-əm/.

Disrupting the general św pattern are certain suffixes which require main word stress (usually internationalisms): /-al/, /-el/, /-ant/, etc.; e.g. *aspiránt* 'research student'.

A rhythmically determined secondary stress occurs two syllables before a main stress; thus, the unstressed /mə/ in /məʃúməd/ 'apostate' receives rhythmic secondary stress in the plural /məʃumódəm/. In this sense, rhythmic stress is related to foot formation rules, and the basic Yiddish foot św.

Generally, Yiddish is a stress-timed language. Very little work has been done on Yiddish intonation; noteworthy is Weinreich (1956) on the 'rise-fall' intonation contour used in specific functions. In this rise-fall intonation, pitch goes from low to high, followed by a sharp fall (L–H–L). The initial L– must begin on the last primary stress of a construction. The realization of the subsequent H–L appears to be based on considerations of foot structure. The functions of the rise-fall intonation include: dramatic (semantic) transition between phrases, signalling of an incredulous question, and echo questions. The rise-fall intonation possibly may be traced back to pre-Ashkenazic Talmudic chant. It is not found in an identical form in languages co-territorial with Yiddish. The rise-fall contour in the above-mentioned functions has receded during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, during the period of 'westernization'.

Word Boundaries

In words which begin with a vowel, Yiddish has a glottal stop which is much weaker than its Standard German counterpart. It readily disappears in context: StYid. /an epl/ – > [anepl] 'an apple'; cf. StGer. *ein Apfel* [ʔain ʔapfəl]. The weak Yiddish [ʔ] may be part of a general tendency in Yiddish to weaken word-boundary distinctions, linked with other boundary-associated phenomena (e.g. no initial aspiration of /p, t, k/; widespread loss of final obstruent devoicing) (King 1990). Nevertheless, morpheme and word boundaries are evident in a number of phonological rules in Yiddish, e.g. post-tonic reduction and compound-stress rules.

Compounding

Yiddish has compounds with the 'Germanic-type' stress pattern ś̀w : /tógbùx/ 'diary' (< /tog/ [modifier] 'day' + /bux/ [head] 'book'), as well as with Hebrew/Aramaic-type' wś̀ : /sèjfər-tójrə/ 'Torah scroll (lit. scroll of Torah)'. The latter type show Hebrew/Aramaic order of elements head–modifier. When two Hebrew/Aramaic origin words are compounded in Yiddish in modifier–head order, the stress pattern ś̀w obtains: StYid. /jəʃívə-bòxər/ 'Yeshiva lad' (vs HA /bɔ:hù:r-jəʃi:βɔ́:/) is fully integrated into the dominant Germanic compounding pattern. The Hebrew/Aramaic-type compounds like /sèjfər-tójrə/ show partial, phonologically based, morphological integration into the Germanic pattern: gender and number are determined by the final element (as opposed to the head) in both source languages, Hebrew and German (Jacobs 1991).

Relation to orthography

Yiddish is written in a modified form of the Aramaic alphabet used in the writing of all Jewish languages (including Hebrew) since approximately the middle of the first millennium BCE. It is written from right to left. Yiddish orthography is often called 'phonetic' – except for words of Hebrew and Aramaic origin, which are written in their traditional (Hebrew or Aramaic) spelling. The development of modern Yiddish orthography has entailed a number of innovations in the use of an alphabet used for writing Semitic languages (based on consonantal roots) for writing a Germanic language where vowels are part of the root. Thus, vowels (and diphthongs) are represented as an integral part of the line of the written word (rather than with diacritics, in Semitic fashion). The modern Yiddish independent vowel symbols are innovations based on the Hebrew symbols for glides [j] and [w], and two consonants which were lost (as consonants) in the pronunciation of Ashkenazic Hebrew: ע (ayin; historically, *pharyngeal fricative /ʕ/) and א (alef; historically, *glottal stop /ʔ/). By orthographic convention (reflecting earlier Semitic orthography), Yiddish words which begin with a vowel are written with initial silent alef, or by a vowel letter based on alef: אַ /a/, and אָ /o/ – except for initial /e/, written with ע. (ע is also used to represent the

Table 12.3 The Yiddish alphabet

Letter	IPA	Romanization	Letter	IPA	Romanization
א	—	—	ײַ	[aj]	ay
אַ	[a]	a	כּ	[k]	k
אָ	[o]	o	כ (ך)	[x]	kh
בּ	[b]	b	ל	[l]	l
ב	[v]	v	מ (ם)	[m]	m
ג	[g]	g	נ (ן)	[n]	n
ד	[d]	d	ס	[s]	s
ה	[h]	h	ע	[e], [ə]	e
ו	[u]	u	פּ	[p]	p
וו	[v]	v	פ (ף)	[f]	f
וי	[oj]	oy	צ (ץ)	[ts]	ts
ז	[z]	z	ק	[k]	k
זש	[ʒ]	zh	ר	[r]	r
ח	[x]	kh	ש	[ʃ]	sh
ט	[t]	t	שׂ	[s]	s
י	[i], [j]	i, y	ת	[t]	t
ײ	[ej]	ey	תּ	[s]	s

Note: Word-final forms given in parentheses.

unstressed vowel, [ə]. The Yiddish alphabet is given in Table 12.3.

The current century has seen the emergence of two main standardized orthographic systems: that of the YIVO (and the CYSHO (Central Jewish School Organization) of Poland), presented in 1936, and the Soviet orthography, developed after the Russian Revolution of 1917. The two systems are similar; the main difference is that Soviet orthography eliminated etymological spelling for words of Hebrew and Aramaic origin as part of a de-hebraization movement. Thus, Yid. /ʃojmər/ 'guard' is spelled traditionally in the YIVO orthography: שומר, and phonetically in the Soviet orthography: שוימער. (Less successful was the Soviet attempt to do away with the traditional convention of using the word-final variants of five consonants: פּ – ף (/f/); צ – ץ (/ts/); כ – ך (/x/); מ – ם (/m/); נ – ן (/n/). These have been largely reintroduced in recent decades.) In the case of /xojzək/ 'fun, mocking', false etymology has led to 'Hebrew' spelling: חוזק, based on the common model in, e.g. /ʃojmər/: שומר. Conversely, Hebrew/Aramaic origin words no longer identified as such are spelled phonetically: מעקן /mekn/ 'to erase' (cf. Hebrew root מחק √mḥq). The rest of this discussion will be based on the YIVO orthography.

Six letters of the Hebrew alphabet are only used with Hebrew and Aramaic

origin words: ת ת ש כ ח ב. In each case, there has been phonetic merger with other sounds: מ ם ק כ ו. (The latter are used generally, as the basic representations in Yiddish.) Thus, Yiddish /sojnə/ 'enemy' is written in the YIVO system: שׂונא, while in the Soviet system it is written: בוינע.

Yiddish consonant phonemes lacking an adequate corresponding single Hebrew letter are created through innovative combinations. Thus, the Yiddish affricate /c/ is represented by a single letter: צ, which was an affricate in Ashkenazic Hebrew (though fricative /s/ in earlier Hebrew); Yid. /tʃ/ by טש (/t/ + /ʃ/), /ʒ/ by זש (/z + ʃ/), /ʤ/ by דזש (/d/ + /ʒ/).

In the YIVO system, the syllabicness of ִ when adjacent to another vowel is indicated by a dot underneath; thus: רוִיק /ru $ ik/ 'peaceful' vs רויך /rojx/ 'smoke'. Sequences of וו (/v/) and ו (/u/) are disambiguated by a dot mid-level to the left of the vowel ו; thus ווּו /vu/ 'where', פּרווּון /pruvn/ 'to attempt'.

The marginal phonemes palatalized /l^{j}/ and /n^{j}/ are not systematically indicated in Standard Yiddish orthography (though they are sometimes represented by לי, ני); thus: שפּילקע /ʃpil^{j}kə/ 'pin', באַנקע /ban^{j}kə/ 'cupping glass'.

The so-called 'phoneticness' of Standard Yiddish orthography is more a mixed (phonemic and morphophonemic) system. Morphophonemic voicing assimilations are not indicated: in /zog/ + /t/ 'say-s', /g/ – > [k] /____t, but is written זאָגט; similarly, /red/ + /t/ 'speak-s' is written רעדט. Consonant degemination (in non-compounds) is indicated: /hejs/ + /st/ – > הייסט '[you] are called' (= /hejs/ + /t/ – > הייסט 's/he is called'); thus also: /loz/ + /st/ – > לאָזט '[you] let', /zic/ + /st/ – > זיצט '[you] sit'.

In what follows, Yiddish forms will be referred to by means of the romanizations of Table 12.3.

12.3 Morphology

The Nominal Group

The Noun

Like German, Yiddish has a three-gender and two-number system. Gender is partially predictable from either the semantics or the ending of the noun. Thus words denoting males and females tend to be masculine (*rebe* 'rabbi'), feminine (*rebetsn* 'rabbi's wife'), respectively, and *-er* is associated with masculine (*fentster* 'window'), *-ik* with feminine (*gramatik* 'grammar'), and the diminutive suffixes *-l* and *-ele* with neuter (*hezl* < *hoz* 'hare'). In some cases the semantics and the ending may yield the same prediction, as with the feminizing suffix *-in* (*lererin* 'female teacher'), but they may be in conflict too, as with *meydl* 'girl' (diminutive from *moyd* 'maid'), which can be feminine or neuter. Gender differences between German and Yiddish cognates may result from variation in the ancestor Germanic dialects; Slavic

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